

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed October 5, 2006. The Examiner is thanked for his thorough examination. In the Office Action, claims 11-32 and 66-75 have been allowed. Claims 76-80 have been withdrawn and claims 81-84 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Applicants have cancelled claims 76-84 without prejudice.

Therefore, all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and thus, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowance.

Applicant respectfully advises the Examiner of the presence of two patents that appear to be commonly owned or under an obligation to assign with the subject application: USP 5,665,953 and USP 7,240,843.

Furthermore, Applicant has received an email from an unknown third party that identified a patent, namely U.S. Patent No. 5,884,271. The third party simply submitted the email to the undersigned attorney without any further contact with the undersigned attorney, even a confirmation of receipt. The email was received after the mailing of the Office Action and less than three months from the filing date of this response. In particular, the third party recited that the Examiner relied on our arguments on May 31st concerning the lack of teaching of all of the claim elements set forth in Schilling, Kawan nor Miyake with respect to allowance of the pending claims and directed our attention to claims 28-32 and figure 4 of the '271 patent.

In accordance with our duty to disclose, Applicants respectfully submit an IDS that identifies the '271 Patent for the USPTO's consideration along with results of a brief art search conducted October 31, 2007. Applicant respectfully requests the USPTO to issue a Notice of Allowance at the Examiner's earliest opportunity.

Telephonic Conference

Applicant welcomes the Examiner to contact the undersigned attorney to discuss the status of the claims if such discussion is necessary to facilitate prosecution of the subject application.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated: October 31, 2007

By


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